

STATEMENT
OF
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BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
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2:30 P.M.
253 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much for the opportunity to testify. My name is John O'Connor, and I am currently Vice President and Chief of the Amtrak Police Department (APD). The Department's strength is more than 500 sworn and civilian personnel at more than 30 locations spread across the 46 states in which Amtrak operates the passenger rail system. I speak to you as someone who has more than 38 years police experience in the passenger rail and mass transit environment. My testimony today is in response to the emerging threat to rail in this country that was recently highlighted by information obtained from the UBL compound.

During a prior appearance before this Committee, I testified that the threat against rail was very real and I described the manner in which Amtrak had responded by focusing on threats related to the use of IEDs in a station or on a train or by an active shooter scenario. The recent events after the death of bin Laden serve as a stark reminder that these threats continue to be viable and that a new twist was added - that terrorists are considering derailing trains. This is of particular concern to Amtrak who operates high speed rail trains where catastrophic losses could occur. This begs the question – are we doing enough to detect and deter terrorist acts on surface transportation, and can we do more to try to prevent a terrorist rail tragedy from happening?

Upon receipt of the intelligence information from the UBL compound, a meeting was held with TSA officials where discussion took place regarding what was uncovered, and evaluated how to proceed and address threats regarding the right of way and derailment of trains. Amtrak also collaborated with other federal, state and local agencies and initiated a response that addressed right of way threats. These steps included:

- Increasing right of way patrols focusing on bridge and tunnel infrastructure and to report such checks.
- Shifting Operation Regional Alliance Including Local, State and Federal Efforts (RAIL SAFE) strategy to include right of way patrols.
- Requesting law enforcement air and marine support for critical infrastructure and right of way patrols when possible.

- Reviewing our current Capital Security Plan to ensure our right of way risks are being adequately addressed.
- Deploying special operations personnel to right of way coverage in conjunction with uniform patrol.
- Coordinating with other Amtrak departments (Engineering, and Mechanical) to ensure employee reporting of unusual occurrences and to ensure gates are locked, buildings secured, liaison with bridge tenders etc.
- Alerting employees and reinforcing security programs and vigilance messages.

While Amtrak was undertaking these new countermeasures, it still remained committed to existing programs, such as:

Explosive Canine Detection Program

Amtrak now has 47 bomb-detecting canine teams. Included in this group are specially trained “vapor wake” canine teams that can actually detect the presence of fumes left after someone passes through with an explosive device. Amtrak has moved to the forefront of the field with use of this unique canine application and continues to work to build this counter-terror capability and has about one third of the canine teams vapor wake trained. In fiscal year 2010, Amtrak canine teams performed over 11,000 train rides in protection of the traveling public. These activities were in addition to the 34,000 train rides and over a 100,000 gate /platform checks performed by APD patrol officers. Canine teams also conducted 25 coordinated surge operations where groups of bomb-detecting canine teams unpredictably appeared at various locations throughout the entire Amtrak system to show increased security and a law enforcement presence.

Security Inspection Program

In 2008, Amtrak began a random baggage screening program similar to one pioneered by the NYPD. Using technology, screening teams deploy in an unpredictable fashion designed to make it harder for a terrorist to predict the level of security. In 2010, APD’s Special Operations Unit performed over 3,000 passenger baggage screening operations

in which thousands of trains were screened, resulting in tens of thousands of passengers being randomly selected for screening. Through an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act /Transportation Security Grant program (ARRA/TSGP) Amtrak expanded this screening program by adding two additional screening teams in the Northeast Corridor.

Active Shooter Training

The APD has performed SWAT-type training in the rail environment with over 45 agencies since 2008 and has expanded the program to include a Passenger Rail Tactical Training component in order to increase state and local law enforcement personnel's awareness and ability to respond and deploy in a rail station or on a passenger rail train car and in extremis responses.

All APD sworn personnel are receiving training on active shooter type incidents.

Corporate Security

Amtrak has leveraged the Transit Security Grant and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant programs to improve protection for passengers, employees, and critical infrastructure.

We will never stop assessing Amtrak's vulnerabilities. Many of the projects have built upon earlier risk assessments performed for Amtrak and will be closely focused on addressing these individual vulnerabilities. Use of grant funds to install fences, closed circuit TV and other security improvements is directly tied to Amtrak's commitment to let our risk assessments drive security investment.

The security program is managed in part by Station Action Team personnel. They work closely with the Operations Department to ensure Amtrak security and emergency response policies are followed and coordinated as part of a larger risk reduction strategy that incorporates recovery, continuity of operations processes and drills and exercises. These Station Action Teams along with Regional Security Coordinating Committees

have involved our station staffs in the security planning process. This integration has improved coordination and raised employee awareness of potential security threats.

Collaboration with TSA

Amtrak has had a very good relationship with TSA and appreciates the support and assistance it has received over the years from this agency.

Since 2007, Amtrak and TSA started joint deployments with TSA's "Visible Intermodal Protection and Response" (VIPR) team program, which was developed to augment the integral security operations of various transportation modes, such as the Amtrak Police or transit security. These provide a visible uniformed presence and can help dedicated law enforcement to deter or detect suspicious activity, and they provide the traveling public with a reassuring police presence. These operations have basically involved the unannounced "surge" of TSA personnel onto Amtrak trains and stations at various points, and are designed to test the ability of TSA to flex support to surface transportation. A total of 858 VIPR operations have been held since inception.

Amtrak leveraged the success of VIPR operations in 2009 and collaborated with TSA to expand their presence by conducting joint passenger screening operations, using additional TSA assets, including Bomb Appraisal Officers, Behavior Screening Officers and Surface Transportation Security Inspectors to augment Amtrak screening forces.

We have continued to positively develop this relationship by coordinating the Suspicious Activity Reporting Program (SAR) to help identify potential emerging terrorist trends or activities and are presently going through the Baseline Assessment for Security Enhancement (BASE) process with TSA Surface Transportation Inspection Officials.

Northeast Corridor (NEC) Coalition

Amtrak continues to work with major law enforcement and DHS officials from Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Washington, DC to work in a collaborative way to enhance public safety on surface transportation, particularly for communities on Amtrak's NEC. A meeting was held at the request of

NYPD Commissioner Kelly to coordinate and reinforce efforts to protect the public using surface transportation after notification of intelligence information received from the UBL raid.

Operation RAIL SAFE (Regional Alliance Including Local, State and Federal Efforts)

This program, developed in partnership with Amtrak, NYPD and TSA, involves the coordinated efforts of multiple jurisdictions to heighten station patrols, increase police presence on trains, by deploying assets in both uniform and undercover capacity. These operations allow for federal, state and local agencies to exercise counter-terrorism and incident response capabilities.

For example, on May 19, 2011, a RAILS SAFE Operation was conducted that involved 155 agencies, 34 states, including Washington, DC, Canadian cities Vancouver and Montreal and 1,035 law enforcement personnel at 204 stations (107 Amtrak). This was aligned in Europe through RAILPOL with their 24 BLUE European Rail Operation.

Front-line Employee Training

Amtrak has been actively focusing on providing security training to our frontline employees recognizing that they are the eyes and ears of the railroad.

Amtrak employees will continue to be a key piece of our security strategy. They are valuable sources of information that can “cue” the law enforcement system. Amtrak benefits from the services and operational knowledge of upwards of 19,000 people who work on the railroad. They are reminded daily of the importance of their diligence and alertness to suspicious activity, how to recognize suspicious activity and who to report to by way of Daily Crime tips. An Employee Security Handbook and Employee Security Updates are additional resources that outline awareness information.

In 2007 approximately 14,000 frontline employees received classroom training. In 2009 refresh classroom security training which included civilian version of BASS training was provided to 7700 Transportation frontline employees. During this year,

2011, about 8300 frontline Transportation employees are receiving classroom training by way of an interactive simulated course. Along with refresh training on recognizing and reporting suspicious activity, the 2011 training includes a first-time presented scenario on an active shooter incident.

An updated strategic Employee Security Training Plan is being developed which will outline the way forward for security training for all employees, to include a robust multi-year exercise program against a broad spectrum of threats.

Technology

Amtrak has a range of mitigation strategies and solutions in place and planned for the future. Various types of remediation are implemented based upon risk and vulnerability assessments and best practices. Amtrak has focused on a range of strategies including target hardening (high security fencing, bollards, blast curtain/Mylar protection, access control, etc.) and has most recently implemented more technologically driven initiatives. These initiatives have historically been applied to stations, bridges and tunnels however, in light of recent events, Amtrak is exploring expanding these strategies to include right-of-way protection.

Amtrak used the following technologies to prevent, detect and deter terrorist acts:

Blast/ Mitigation Studies

- Engineering assessments of structural designs of critical infrastructure (bridges, tunnels, stations and facilities)
- Focus on chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, explosives (CBRNE) threats and asymmetric modes of attack
- Advanced simulation and modeling techniques to identify exploitable single/multi points of failure and reduce/eliminate the risk of catastrophic consequences, such as loss of life or operational functionality, from an attack

Smart ID Cards (HSPD12 – Homeland Security Presidential Directive #12)

- Implementation of HSPD12 compatible employee identification cards to reduce unauthorized access to restricted areas
- The computer chip on the card can be used for security enhancements (e.g., digital signing of emails and data)
- Smart ID program has enabled Amtrak to enhance security through identifying and remedying security gaps, and has provided an opportunity to enforce existing access control and employee identification policies

CCTV

- Several CCTV systems are in place throughout the rail network
- CCTV enhances APD's situational awareness and communication capabilities
- Amtrak is looking to augment its CCTV capabilities by utilizing integrated advanced technology (cameras, sensors, fencing, and access control instruments) to protect critical infrastructure
- Potential technology will result in an automated state-of-the-art remote surveillance and intuitive, user-friendly 3-D Graphical User Interface (GUI)
- The systems will be designed using proprietary algorithms and will be ruled based driven to detect anomalies in the camera view

Access Control

- Several access control systems are in place throughout the rail network and APD expects to expand upon current solutions as advancements in access control and intrusion detection when they become available

Radiological Pagers

- Portable trace detector that can detect explosives, chemical warfare agents, toxic industrial chemicals and can do so in approximately 20 seconds
- APD sworn personnel are equipped with radiological pagers while on patrol

Amtrak is developing the following technologies to improve upon existing security strategy and operations, enhance interagency information sharing and local agency response to Amtrak incidents:

iCOP – Integrated Communication and Operations Program

- GIS based incident and response planning tool to enhance situational awareness
- Visually displays integrated data on an interactive multi-user touch screen or desktop system including when officers are on patrol near the right of way
- Utilizes critical infrastructure, homeland security, law enforcement, and Amtrak data for simulations, modeling, alerts and analysis
- Makes crucial data available simultaneously, in real-time, to multiple key decision makers to plan appropriate response scenarios and implement operating procedures
- Capabilities include train and officer tracking, access to CCTV feeds, response plans, public safety and law enforcement alerts, floor plans, access control integration, etc.
- Similar to systems recently launched at the Department of Defense – Knowledge Display and Aggregation System (KDAS) and FEMA – Integrated Situational Awareness Visualization Environment (iSAVE)

ROMAN - Risk Operating Management Analysis Network (Secure Network)

- APD's Secure Network is nearing end of development and will provide support for security related technology projects (i.e. iCOP, CCTV, Access Control, etc.)
- Robust & redundant network backbone
- Provides a platform for secure communications & information sharing
- Support CCTV and Video command centers aggregating & displaying internal & external information
- Federalized and centrally managed system

Right-of-Way (ROW)

- Amtrak is currently working with TSA to examine potential technology based ROW intrusion detection solutions

- Solutions would include integrated sensor technology with cameras to monitor for intrusion along the ROW

In conclusion, we are very concerned about recent events and we will continue to work with the Federal government to do all that we can to protect America's rails. We will work with DHS, TSA and the Committee to identify funding sources for additional frontline employee training and advanced technology to address threats. The security of our system is our top priority, and I look forward to working with the Committee in coming months to make sure that we have the people, the training, the technology and the intelligence we need to keep our system safe and secure.

I appreciate this opportunity to discuss security at Amtrak and I look forward to any questions.